EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. COVID-19 (5)

CITY OF MERIDIAN

WHEREAS, on March 18, pursuant to Section §33-15-17(d), Mississippi Code of 1972, I issued a Proclamation declaring that a State of Emergency exists in the City of Meridian as a result of the outbreak of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and after extensive consultation with the State Health Officer, additional measures are necessary to protect the health and safety of the public, to mitigate the impact of COVID-19, and to disrupt the spread of the virus;

WHEREAS, §21-19-2 gives municipalities the authority to make regulations to prevent the spreading of contagious or infectious diseases and to make laws for that purpose; and

WHEREAS, the CDC states to recent studies where a “significant portion of individuals with coronavirus lack symptoms and that even those who eventually develop symptoms can transmit the virus to others before showing symptoms. This means that the virus can spread between people interacting in close proximity – for example, speaking, coughing, or sneezing – event if those people are not exhibiting symptoms”; and

WHEREAS, the CDC and MSDH recommend wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain and in areas of significant community based transmission; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Percy Bland, Mayor of the City of Meridian, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and law of the State of Mississippi, do hereby order and direct as follows in the City of Meridian, this transitional plan to begin reopening non-essential businesses to be implemented no later than 5:00 p.m. on Monday, April 27, 2020, and will be enforced until 8 a.m. on Monday, May 11, 2020, unless extended:

- All employees of essential businesses and all employees of nonessential businesses that are open to maintain minimal operations must wear a mask when working in or moving about the same workspace as other employees or working in or moving about the same room as the public. For the purposes of this executive order, “mask” shall be defined as any face covering; including but not limited to fabric masks, homemade linen or cloth masks, household dust masks, handkerchief, scarf, surgical mask or N95 mask.
- Nothing in this order shall prevent a business from implementing a more restrictive policy in terms of other measures to contain and prevent the transmission of COVID-19.
- All social distancing requirements and limits on gatherings of more than 10 people from previous mayoral Executive Orders as well as Governor Reeves’ Executive Orders shall remain in effect.
• **Nonessential retail stores.** (sporting goods, clothing stores, florists, furniture stores, auto dealers, book stores and jewelry stores) shall limit access to their stores to allow 50% of a store’s occupancy space. Retail stores are required to follow CDC guidelines including wearing face masks (employees and customers), social distancing of 6 feet or more for each customer, and handwashing protocol.

• **Evictions Suspended.** Evictions within The City of Meridian are suspended until April 30, and all state, county and local law enforcement officers in The City of Meridian are directed to cease enforcement of orders of eviction for residential premises. No provision contained within this Order shall be construed as relieving any individual of the obligation to pay rent, to make mortgage payments, or to comply with any other obligation that an individual may have under tenancy or mortgage.

• **Religious Services.** Places of worship are encouraged to limit attendees to ten (10) persons or less. All persons present are encouraged to wear masks. Curbside services where attendees remain in their vehicles are encouraged along with live-stream, online broadcast or other social media platforms for viewing services.

The following businesses shall remained closed:

• All spas, nail salons, tattoo shops, and massage parlors
• All barber shops and hair salons
• All gyms, dance studios and fitness centers
• Entertainment venues, such as skating rinks, movie theaters, bowling alleys, etc.
• Restaurants may only provide take-out, pick-up, curb side, delivery, or drive-through services. There shall be no in-house dining or available sitting areas for the public.
• Bars, taverns, lounges and nightclubs except to the extent that such establishments may only provide take-out, pick-up, delivery, or drive-through services.

This Executive Order shall be in effect in and for The City of Meridian, Mississippi, from April 27, 2020 at 5 p.m. until May 11, 2020, at 8:00 a.m. or until this Executive Order is rescinded by further order or by operation of law. This provision may be extended beyond May 11, 2020 by further order.

[Signature]

PERCY BLAND, III, MAYOR
CITY OF MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI

ATTEST:

[Signature]

BRANDYE LATIMER, CITY CLERK

4/24/20

Date